

punctual payment of Instalments, all the conditions, such as actual occupation, and clearing, should be abrogated, and transfers encouraged. A large proportion of the purchasers of the public lands, are mere laborers whose means were exhausted on commencement, or in the first deposit of ten per cent, and they then return to the Railways, or other public works, whence they came—in many instances, trusting to realising a profit by selling their rights. If the first year expire without the conditions of sale being complied with, many valuable settlers might be discouraged from settling on the land at all, owing to an apprehension of the consequences attending default, if strictly enforced, whilst many work to accumulate enough money from their labor, to enable them at a future time, to occupy the land, and will visit any opposing claimants under resales of forfeited lands (if Government should resort to such a course) by violence.

The Government Regulations were no doubt framed for two purposes. 1stly, To obtain immediate settlement of the desirable class for the country. 2ndly, To render the lands available to taxation, so that the country should thereby be furnished with means for the requisite improvements. It is much questioned as already shown, whether any good and beneficial settlement will arise by an adherence to those Regulations, and consequently the second object will fail of accomplishment. It is suggested for consideration, whether all desired objects might not be effected, by abolishing all the regulations, upon condition that each purchaser, or assignee of a lot, should be bound to pay all taxes from time to time imposed and that the Government should make a return of the names of the holders of the lands, and further, that Patents should issue for any lands upon payment of the purchase money with interest. It is believed, that had some such plan been adopted, the lands, instead of yielding 7s. 6d. and 10s. per acre, upon deferred payment by Instalments of ten years, surrounded with trouble and embarrassment, they would have produced on an average 20s. per acre, and have very soon been paid for in full, freed from all the expected difficulties, whilst a healthy, and desirable class of settlers would have located on the public lands.

I have the honor to remain, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

FRED. WIDDER,
Commissioner.

To the Clerk of the Committee,
Lands Department.
Quebec.

Mr. Tarbutt, Crown Land Department, Examined.

Question,—Will you state to the Committee your views as to the system under which the sale of lands is carried on under local agents; and also as to the steps which you would recommend in view of promoting the efficiency and accuracy of the Department?

Answer,—I am of opinion that it would be inadvisable to attempt to carry on the business of the Department without local agents. If you take into consideration the amount of money received annually, which, were the agencies abolished, would have to be sent by mail in small sums, averaging in all probability for this year from 30 to 40 daily payments, together with the necessarily attendant correspondence in acknowledging these receipts, answering inquiries, and in very many instances returning money because the lot applied for had been already disposed of; you will be able to appreciate (but